DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 250 246 SO 015 991

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TITLE The Research and Development Function of the 1983 Getty Institute for Educators on the Visual Arts.
PUB DATE Apr 84
NOTE 18p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (68th, New Orleans, LA, April 23-27, 1984).
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Art Education; Elementary Education; Faculty Development; Inservice Teacher Education; *Institutes (Training Programs); Program Descriptions; Program Evaluation; Teacher Workshops; *Visual Arts

ABSTRACT

Teams of elementary teachers, school administrators, and school board members from seven representative school districts in Los Angeles County (California) participated in a 3-week summer institute (1983) with the aim of learning to plan and implement systematic discipline-based art programs that included aesthetic, critical, historical, and productive experiences. The 98 participants were involved in nine staff development components, including formal presentations, teach-ins, principal seminars, workshops, panel discussions, and consultations. School district teams subsequently engaged in year-long implementation activities in their schools; ongoing technical assistance was provided throughout the year by the Getty Institute staff. Evaluation results indicated that participant ratings of the summer programs were high and that attitudes toward art education changed significantly as measured by pre- and posttests. Regular site visits by the Institute staff during 1983-84 showed participants to be providing sequential, systematic art lessons for at least one hour per week. Results of pupil achievement tests are not yet available. (LH)

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The Research and Development Function of the 1983 Getty Institute for Educators on the Visual Arts

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Running Head: Getty Research and Development

SO 015 991

Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (68th, New Orleans, LA, April 23-27, 1984).

Abstract

The Getty Institute for Educators on the Visual Arts is testing the hypothesis that teams of elementary teachers, administrators, and school board members can plan and implement systematic discipline-based art programs. The term discipline-based art education describes instruction in the concepts and processes intrinsic to art: aesthetic, critical, historical, and productive. The 1983 Institute had 98 participants from seven Los Angeles County school districts who attended a three-week summer staff-development program and implemented discipline-based art programs during the following year in their elementary schools. Participant ratings of the summer programs were high, and all participants subsequently taught sequential, systematic art lessons for at least one hour per week. Results of pupil achievement tests are not yet available.

The Research and Development Function of the
1983 Getty Institute for Educators on the Visual Arts

The purpose of the Getty Center for Education in the Arts,[1] an operating unit of The J. Paul Getty Trust, is to research and develop arts education programs (Duke, 1983). The Getty Institute for Educators on the Visual Arts[2] is one of several Center projects; it explores introducing discipline-based art programs into elementary schools.

The Institute is a grand experiment because it uses careful, systematic scrutiny and analysis of its own procedures in order to achieve sustained progress (Kidd, 1983). The Getty Institute has five components: a theoretical foundation for curriculum; summer staff-development instruction; art-program planning for all classrooms on the district level; art-program implementation throughout the school year; and assessment of pupil achievement.

The Institute generates information about discipline-based art education as delivered in general classroom settings by nonspecialist classroom teachers. The Getty Institute is testing the hypothesis that teams of elementary teachers, administrators, and school board members can plan and implement systematic art programs based on the discipline of art (Greer & Rush, in press).

The Getty Center retains two evaluators[3] who appraise the Institute independently of its staff. The Center's use of thorough, objective evaluation measures is crucial to establishing the

Institute's research validity, and distinguishes it from many other experimental teacher-education programs in the visual arts.

The evaluators examined the development and execution of the summer Institute and are assessing resulting art programs implemented by participants during the current 1983-1984 school year. The sample of participants and school districts is small in number and confined to Los Angeles County public schools, but its demographic characteristics represent larger populations across the country.

The Getty Center has the potential to advance research in the art education field. Art education research is typically applied in nature, idiosyncratic in design, and ignored in practice (Rush & Lovano-Kerr, 1982).

The Getty Center sponsors art education research other than the Institute.[4] By regarding research as informative for educational practice, the Center is establishing precedent in the visual arts. The effects should be productive for the Getty and instructive for a broad spectrum of art professionals.

Art education research overlies more than one field of study. Its methods are eclectic, that is, they originate primarily in anthropology, education, and psychology; but they always serve the discipline of visual art.

The prevailing misapprehension of artists that the process of making art is completely intuitive, spontaneous, and self-referenced has delayed objective analysis of artistic expression and how it is learned. At this point, the Institute has revealed enough promise in an empirical approach to justify continuing Getty research and

development efforts in this direction.

Theoretical Foundations

Adopting a discipline-based approach to art education is the reason the Getty Institute is unique among teacher education projects. The term discipline-based art education describes instruction in the concepts and processes intrinsic to the subject of art (Greer, in press).

A discipline-based art curriculum includes four kinds of concepts and skills: aesthetic (contemplating the nature of art and its role in human experience), critical (describing, interpreting, and assessing art), historical (understanding works of art in cultural or historic contexts), and productive (making art). The goal of discipline-based art education is an adult who uses the concepts, skills, and methods of art to perceive, interpret, and appraise the aesthetic properties of images.

The study of art can be a systematic inquiry that has its own intrinsic values and outcomes distinct from other disciplines that make up the general education curriculum, but that relate to them. The 1983 Institute faculty and consultants, particularly Broudy, Chapman, Eisner, Lanier, and Smith, define this position in their writings.[5]

Discipline-based art instruction emphasizes sequential activities that enable students to become more sophisticated in making, examining, reading, and talking about art. The literature and practice of art, which is the basis for instruction, is the same whether studied by adults or children.

Conceptual congruence produces an educational continuum; art curricula for children are similar to art curricula for adults. Acquisition of art concepts and skills becomes the instructional goal. Teaching moves students from a naive to a sophisticated understanding and appreciation of art at any age.

Discipline-based art education delineates concepts and skills used in making and appreciating art, and arranges them in an ordered way to induce learning. The parameters of the visual arts discipline are derived from the behavior of arts professionals who understand and practice it. Discipline-based art education attempts to illuminate internal structure and thus lends to examination by empirical study.

Research Design of the Institute

The component projects of the Getty Institute are school-district staff development, district-wide program planning, implementation, and assessment of pupil achievement. The Institute seeks to produce long-term results by providing an intense and vivid educational experience for its participants that can weather the other presses on the educational community.

The Insitute uses a team approach, involving higher levels of decision-makers such as principals, superintendents, and school-board members in addition to teachers, as a second way to ensure continuation. A third attempt to bolster implementation is to convince the participants that art has an importance for the elementary curriculum equal to the other basic elementary subjects.

Institute designers hoped participants would learn to view art education as fostering understanding and appreciation of serious works

of art, and to view art as both an educative force and a cultural necessity. They expected that participants who accepted these values would subsequently teach their students to encounter serious works of art in a meaningful way, and would establish programs offering balanced art instruction in aesthetics, studio production, art criticism, and art history.

Subjects

The 1983 Institute invited 98 participants from seven out of 76 Los Angeles County school districts that reflected the County demographic characteristics, had no art consultants or art resource teachers, and were willing to teach art as a part of the regular curriculum. The seven districts represented rural, suburban, and urban neighborhoods, grades served in them ranged from K-6 to K-12, district size (attendance or ADA) ranged from a low of 2,750 to well over a half million, minority concentrations ranged from 17% to 93%, and the socioeconomic status ranged from low to high-medium.

Procedure

Summer. The 1983 summer Institute ran for three weeks. Institute goals were converted into a series of activities expected to assist in reaching the goals. The 1983 staff-development operation had nine clearly distinguishable components: formal presentations, gallery visits, curriculum groups, teaching demonstrations, teach-ins, principal seminars, workshops, panel discussions, and consultations.

The 1983 summer program introduced the literature and pedagogy of art education and presented curriculum resources geared to systematic aesthetic, critical, historical, and studio activities.

Sessions focused on master teachers, the acquiring of art knowledge, and learning to talk about art. Participants planned discipline-based programs for their own schools and districts that included aesthetic, critical, historical, and productive experiences and identified arts resources in their schools and communities.

The Institute presented art to district teams of teachers, principals, superintendents, and school board members in the same discipline-based way as the programs they would later teach their children. Teams studied the history of art, practiced aesthetic scanning[6], read articles about art education, learned how art instruction contributes to general education goals, and observed a teacher[7] demonstrating one example of a discipline-based curriculum (The SWRL Elementary Art Program, 1982) in a simulated classroom situation with elementary school children.

The Institute faculty emphasized the intrinsic nature of aesthetic experience and the fact that images and image-making are central to intellectual activities such as reflection, contemplation, and speculation in any field. They regarded effort as required in order to engage in aesthetic experiences; this effort can be directed by teaching. Education without instruction in art is insufficient for becoming aesthetically literate.

School year. School-district teams subsequently engaged in year-long implementation activities. Team members provided regular art instruction in their schools: they identified aesthetic qualities in visual forms, incorporated studio production, and studied works of art (as distinguished from work produced by children) within an

historical-cultural context. They emphasized art vocabulary, exhibited student work and art reproductions, and practiced aesthetic scanning in the classroom and at art museums.

The Institute staff's ongoing technical assistance during the year following the summer staff-development program encouraged lasting effectiveness of the summer's inservice education. They visited school sites, consulted with participants, attended in-school meetings and events, and published a Getty Institute Information Bulletin. Two special meetings brought all participants together, once in the fall and once again in the spring.

Evaluation Results

Summer Staff Development

Component ratings. Faculty, consultant, and staff lectures formed the largest component of the summer staff-development part of the Institute, although they consumed a relatively small amount of participants' time and effort. There were eight other clearly distinguishable components: gallery visits, curriculum groups, teaching demonstrations, teach-ins, principals' seminars, workshops, panel discussions, and consultations.

Participants daily ranked each presentation using a four-point scale. Teachers and principals highly valued formal lectures for the knowledge they conveyed; overall average rating was 3.24. Participants also valued gallery visits as enjoyable and as providing practice in scanning works of art, explaining the nature of art museums, and demonstrating the usefulness of museums as local art education resources.

The curriculum discussion groups provided one of the greatest guarantees that the Institute would have an educational impact in the schools during the following school year. Participants and staff summarized issues that had or should have been addressed as the groups moved from undirected activities to making specific implementation plans. Participant ratings on the curriculum groups, using three criteria of how useful they felt the discussions to be, how realistically practical problems were addressed, and how much they would affect their plans for art instruction, ranged from 2.93 to 3.75 on a four-point scale.

Participants evaluated teaching demonstrations on the basis of three criteria: practicality of techniques, ways of managing materials, and whether they intended to try them. They rated demonstrations highest on their provision of good and practical techniques and the skills of the demonstration teacher. Participants wanted more opportunity to observe the demonstrations.

Teach-ins were opportunities for participants to try teaching an art lesson. Participants evaluated teach-ins by the same criteria as the teaching demonstrations. Ratings for techniques and material management ranged above 3.0. Participants' intentions to try some of the approaches worked on were lower, partly because some teachers demonstrated lessons for grades other than the one they normally taught.

Attitude changes. Attitudes toward art education in three areas changed significantly during the Institute. An attitude survey given as a pre- and posttest measured a range of attitudes in three

general areas: attitudes that art instruction should be discipline-based, including cognitive, affective, and expressive components; that art is teachable by nonspecialists if training and instructional materials are available; and that art is an important and relevant component of education for all students.

To measure attitudes toward discipline-based instruction, participants responded to the following kinds of statements on pre- and posttests: "children at the elementary level are too young to critique adult works of art." To assess attitudes toward teaching by nonspecialists, participants were given statements like this one: "regular classroom teachers can be expected to lead class discussions that analyze works of art." To guage attitudes toward art as a component of general education, they read statements such as this: "because art is an 'extra' in human life, art instruction is not as critical as instruction in the basics."

School-Year Implementation

The second part of the Institute was program implementation. Regular site visits by Institute staff during 1983-1984 showed Institute participants of the preceding summer to be providing sequential, systematic art instruction for at least one hour per week. In addition, participants were sharing their Institute experiences with other teachers, and were helping them teach art in a discipline-based way. Many taught art terms as part of their language-development programs, and all displayed children's artwork and art reproductions.

Pupil achievement tests referenced to outcomes of

discipline-based instruction, developed by one of the independent evaluators, will be administered during the spring of 1984. Accountability is necessary for educational credibility, and the Getty Center considers evidence of learning indispensable to curriculum implementation and important for distinguishing discipline-based programs from those that stress outcomes other than the teaching of knowledge and skills.

Probabilities and Possibilities

The Getty Institute will continue as a research and development activity in the Los Angeles area for several more years. The 1984 Institute will include master classroom teachers from a new group of schools. Present aims are to train additional teams each year until teams from at least 10% of the schools in the district, or a total of four teams, have attended the Institute.

In a field as scientifically imprecise as art it is unusual to see so systematic an approach, and one that lends itself so well to empirical research. While operating in such an organized mode, the staff of the Institute never lost sight of their ultimate objective--teaching art education.

The Getty Center for Education in the Arts is proceeding cautiously and systematically in establishing the 1983 Institute. The Center is attentive to the need for ongoing evaluation and re-examination as a way to refine the Institute as its staff, faculty, and participants gain experience and expertise. The Getty Institute procedures for self-critical feedback produce large amounts of data usable for further revision and development.

Continuing research with direct application to practice is seldom seen in art (or other) education (Eisner, 1984). The Getty Institute may eventually remedy complaints that art education research rarely affects practice; the Institute's structure offers the possibility of future application of its research findings so necessary to ongoing research activity, and so infrequently seen in art.

Research is concerned with the discovery of meaning, and the Getty Center can provide the kind of long-term commitment that real research progress requires. With the Institute, the Center has made a notable beginning toward achieving one of the goals of The J. Paul Getty Trust: the enhancement of the understanding and appreciation of the visual arts.

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Authors' Notes

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This paper was presented in April, 1984, at the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans.

Research results were abridged and adapted from the Interim Report, Fall 1983 of the Getty Institute for Educators on the Visual Arts. The authors extend their thanks to the staffs of the Getty Center for Education in the Arts and the Getty Institute for Educators on the Visual Arts for their reviews of the material presented here.

Footnotes

[1]Center Staff: Leilani Lattin Duke, Director; Marilynn J. Price, Program Officer.

[2]Institute Staff: W. Dwaine Greer, Director; Frances Hine, Ronald Silverman, and Ruth Zwissler, Associate Directors; Lila Crespin, Consultant.

[3]Ralph Hoepfner, Evaluation Consultant in Education; Blanche Rubin, Art Education Consultant.

[4]An assessment of art education programs in seven public school districts in California, Illinois, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Virginia, and Wisconsin is now in progress. Case studies are being prepared by five educators with art education evaluation research experience, in collaboration with Milbrey McLaughlin of the Rand Corporation: Michael Day, Elliot W. Eisner, Robert Stake, Brent Wilson, and Marjorie Wilson.

[5]1983 Institute Facutly: Harry S. Broudy, Laura H. Chapman, Michael Day, Elliot W. Eisner, Edmund B. Feldman, Vincent Lanier.

1983 Institute Consultants: Warren H. Anderson, Gilbert A. Clark, Hermine Feinstein, Jean C. Rush, Pamela Sharp, Ralph A. Smith.

1984 Institute Faculty: Harry S. Broudy, Michael Day, Margaret K. DiBiasio, Jean C. Rush.

[6]Aesthetic scanning is a method of looking at a work of

art that focuses on identifying and discussing its sensory, formal, expressive, and technical properties. Participants practiced aesthetic scanning of real art (not reproductions) during their museum visits.

[7]Lila Crespin, Vice Principal, Cogswell Elementary School, Los Angeles.